



It is with profound regret, sorrow and humility that we write this letter to the people of Japan, and in particular, to the citizens of the City of Yokosuka.

We consider ourselves members of the Yokosuka community. Therefore, just as the tragic death of Ms. Yoshie Sato has shaken the entire Yokosuka community, we are devastated. We, too, have lost a member of our community. Given that the suspect is a member of the U.S. Navy, it is understandable to us that this tragedy may, to some degree, shake your confidence in the U.S. Navy.

We are committed to the alliance and relationship with the Japanese community. Therefore, we will work relentlessly to ensure that your confidence is restored. We know that it will take time, and that it will be a challenging task, but we willingly accept it.

We have received many passionate and emotional letters of protest over this incident from governmental organizations, civic groups and private citizens. Each letter has expressed sadness, outrage and dismay over this senseless tragedy. We understand and acknowledge these feelings and we accept them as deserving.

On behalf of the men and women of the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet and U.S. Naval Forces in Japan, we offer, and hope that you will accept, our deepest and most sincere apologies to the family and friends of Ms. Sato, to the people of Japan, and to the fine citizens of the City of Yokosuka.

We have met with and expressed personal sorrow and apologies to Mayor Kabaya, Governor Matsuzawa, Admiral Saito the CMS of the JMSDF, Director General Kitahara of DFAA, and Director General Kawai from MOFA. With the gracious consent of Ms. Sato's family, many U.S. Navy members were permitted to attend the wake and the funeral to pay our respects and express our sorrow, remorse and regret.

Just as we have pledged to all with whom we have met, we promise to do everything possible to ensure such a terrible incident is never repeated. We are reinvigorating our cultural indoctrination programs and our personal behavior instructions for our Sailors and their families. We will continue to reinforce the message, and through our actions make clear, that only the highest standards of behavior, dignity and respect will be accepted.

It is our hope that the fine citizens of Japan and Yokosuka understand that the men and women of the U.S. Navy who are here in Japan are good and caring people. They value their place in the Yokosuka community and strive each day to be good neighbors and good ambassadors. Each and every one of them are committed to our countries and are willing to place themselves in harm's way in support of the Japanese-American alliance.

If we could make but one humble request, it would be to ask you to look at the U.S. Navy in Japan not through the lens of this terrible incident, but rather through the lens of the friendship that has been the cornerstone of our relationship and our alliance for so many years. There is a Japanese saying that "after the rain, the ground becomes firm" - it is our hope that this sad affair will prove the catalyst to make our relationships and our alliance even stronger.

Very Sincerely and Respectfully,

Jonathan W. Greenert  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Commander U.S. SEVENTH Fleet

James D. Kelly  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan